

4.8 IMPACTS ON LAND USE

The Proposed Action and its alternatives would affect land use. Each alternative would produce direct impacts on consistency with existing land use controls, existing on-site land uses, and adjacent land uses. The primary land use impacts associated with the Proposed Action and its alternatives are the displacement of existing uses at the Broadwater and Alternative 3 sites and the impact on compatibility with surrounding uses. Each alternative would also produce indirect impacts in the form of spin-off development. Spin-off development creates cumulative impacts on transportation, socioeconomic conditions, water resources, and biological resources, which are discussed in other sections of this EIS. The direct and indirect impacts are analyzed across an ROI that includes 1) the existing Broadwater site and the Alternative 3 sites, plus areas approximately one-quarter mile in radius surrounding those sites, and 2) the three-county region, as a basis for identifying overall land use patterns.

4.8.1 Consistency with Existing Land Use Controls

The impacts on land use controls are viewed primarily in terms of the consistency of the proposed use with current land use regulations. The land use regulations reviewed include the Biloxi Zoning Ordinance (allowable uses), the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan* (future land use designations), the Mississippi Coastal Program (wetlands use categories), and the Keesler Air Force Base (AFB) Structure Height Limit Recommendation Map. The consistency determination does not consider other development regulations related to the design of the project, such as setbacks, landscaping, and signage. However, a cursory review of preliminary development plans indicates that the designs of the Proposed Action and its alternatives appear to meet these regulations. The city of Biloxi will address these issues in more detail during building permit review.

Alternatives 2, 4, and 5

Under Alternatives 2, 4, and 5, the existing uses at the Broadwater site would be intensified and enhanced with additional casino resort and supporting uses. However, since the site is currently used as a casino resort and meets current regulations, the Proposed Action would be consistent with the existing land use controls. It appears that the height of the proposed structures for each alternative is below the recommended height restrictions for Keesler AFB.

Alternative 3

The developments proposed for the Alternative 3 sites are mostly consistent with the local land use controls. In most cases, these sites are located in areas with waterfront commercial and industrial zoning, future land use, and coastal wetlands use designations. A few exceptions exist, as follows:

- Site A has a future land use designation for “institutional” to reflect its existing use as a marina. This designation is inconsistent with the proposed use of a casino resort.

- On Site D, a portion of the property located south of Bayview Avenue has a future land use designation of "institutional" to reflect the use as a baseball field. This designation is inconsistent with the proposed use of parking facilities for the casino resort.
- On Site E, a portion of the coastal wetland is designated for "general" use. This may be inconsistent with the proposed use as a public marina associated with the casino resort. Further consultation with the Department of Marine Resources would be required to determine if an amendment to the coastal wetland use designation would be needed.

It appears that the height of the proposed structures for Alternative 3 is below the recommended height restrictions for Keesler AFB.

No-Action Alternative

Under the No-action Alternative, the existing uses on the Broadwater and alternative sites would remain. The existing uses on these sites are consistent with the current land use control designations. However, as the city of Biloxi continues to grow and land becomes scarce and more valuable, these sites may be considered for redevelopment to higher intensity uses and, in some cases, land use controls may conflict with proposed uses.

4.8.2 Impacts on Existing On-Site Uses

The impacts on existing on-site uses are reviewed in terms of the potential for displacement of uses. Displacement of uses refers to the type and amount of existing uses that would be lost due to the development of the Proposed Action or its alternatives. A site assessment on the Broadwater and Alternative 3 sites was conducted to identify the uses existing on the property. The findings of this assessment were compared to the proposed project layouts to determine the type and amount of uses to be displaced. Table 4.8-1 identifies the findings of this review.

Alternatives 2, 4, and 5

Under Alternatives 2, 4, and 5, the existing uses at the Broadwater site would be redeveloped. Since the site is currently used as a casino resort, these alternatives would not result in a displacement of uses. The existing uses would be intensified and enhanced with additional casino resort and supporting uses.

Table 4.8-1
Type of Use Displaced Due to Development of Sites

Location	Existing Use	Size/Amount of Use Displaced
Broadwater Site	Broadwater hotels with related amenities, casino, golf course, & marina.	N/A: uses are not displaced
Alternative 3 Sites		
- Site A	Marina and parking lot for marina and adjacent casino.	287 boat slips, 3,500 sq ft harbor master's office, fueling area, and approximately 550 paved and unpaved parking spaces.
- Site B	Surface parking lot for casino ¹ and single family residence.	Approximately 495 parking spaces; 1 single family residence.
- Site C	Manufacturer of pre-formed concrete products.	2,500 sq ft office building, 1,500 sq ft storage building, 500 sq ft carpenter's shop, 400 sq ft guard tower, 2 covered bus stops; 438,349 sq ft for open storage; approximately 685-space parking area.
- Site D	Boat haul-out and repair facility, hardware store, seven houses, and a baseball field.	12,000 sq ft storage and repair building, 100 sq ft office, and a haul-out dock; approximately 130,028 sq ft for open storage; 7 single family homes, 5,000 sq ft hardware store and a public baseball field.
- Site E	Fuels and petroleum distributor, seafood processing company.	15,000 sq ft office/warehouse, barge unloading facility with piers, and 21 above-ground storage tanks (ranging in size from 1,000 to 1,000,000 gallons); 16,000 sq ft seafood processing facility, 1,500 sq ft office building, 1,000 sq ft deep-freeze building, docking facility.
- Site F	Seafood processing and cold storage company, ice house and fueling facility, fishing docks.	45,000 sq ft of building surface area consisting of a receiving and processing building, cold storage building, 2-story ice house, general storage building, and an office building; multi-pier unloading facility and on-dock fueling facility; portion of entry drive and parking lot for fishing docks, 200 sq ft storage shed.

Source: Brown and Mitchell, Inc., 1999b.

¹ Site is currently being developed for the New Palace Casino Hotel. When site was selected as an alternative, the existing use was surface parking for the adjacent New Palace Casino.

Alternative 3

Existing uses are present on the six sites identified in Alternative 3. Under Alternative 3, all of these uses (as depicted in Table 4.8-1) would be displaced if the sites were developed for casino resorts. The majority of these sites are in traditional industrial locations on the Back Bay and provide water-dependent services such as seafood processing, fuel distribution, and boat repair. Table 4.8-2 summarizes the total displacement of uses on the Alternative 3 sites.

Table 4.8-2
Summary of Displaced Uses on the Alternative 3 Sites

Existing Uses to be Displaced	Impacts
105,000+ square feet of existing commercial and industrial buildings and over 560,000 square feet of outside storage and work areas utilized by existing businesses.	Replaces historical water-dependent industrial and commercial activities, Biloxi's traditional economic generators, with tourism related services.
Temporary displacement of 287 public boat slips used primarily for recreational vessels to be replaced with 380 casino-related boat slips, resulting in a net gain of 93 boat slips.	There is a current dearth of public boat slips on the Gulf Coast (see Section 3.12 & 4.12) which will be temporarily intensified during casino construction.
Approximately 1,045 parking spaces (paved and unpaved) used by adjoining casinos.	Casinos will need to replace lost parking spaces in another location.
8 single family homes.	Requires the relocation of 8 families.

Source: Brown and Mitchell, Inc., 1999b; Harrison County aerals.

The loss of seafood industry uses to casino uses is contrary to the goals of the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan*. Specifically, LUPE-41 states "historically, Biloxi's industrial base included facilities related to the seafood industry. With the introduction of dockside gaming many of the older Gulf side seafood related industrial facilities were displaced. Those that remain are concentrated on Back Bay. Locations should be preserved for the local seafood industry" (city of Biloxi, 1996b).

No-Action Alternative

Under the No-action Alternative, the existing uses on the Broadwater and alternative sites would remain; therefore, no immediate displacement of uses would occur. However, as the city of Biloxi continues to grow and land becomes scarce and more valuable, these sites may be considered for redevelopment to higher intensity uses by other developers. Redevelopment activities in the Back Bay area are consistent with the city of Biloxi's plans to shift residential and industrial zoning to a commercial future land use designation in the Back Bay area.

4.8.3 Impacts on Adjacent Land Uses

The impacts on adjacent land uses are reviewed in terms of the compatibility of the Proposed Action and its alternatives to surrounding land uses. The compatibility of the Proposed Action and its alternatives to adjacent land uses is determined by reviewing the zoning and future land

use designations of the properties immediately adjacent to the Proposed Action and alternative sites. While it is difficult to precisely determine the compatibility of a development to adjacent uses by the zoning and future land use designations, it is appropriate to assume that a high-intensity commercial development (i.e., casino resort) is likely to be more compatible with commercial uses than with residential or industrial uses. Table 4.8-3 summarizes the findings of the compatibility review.

Table 4.8-3
Adjacent Zoning and Future Land Use Designations

	Zoning of Adjacent Property	Linear Feet Abutting Site(s)	% of Linear Feet	Future Land Use of Adjacent Property	Linear Feet Abutting Site(s)	% of Linear Feet
Broadwater Site (less golf course property ¹)	Residential	1,400	20%	Residential	1,400	20%
	Commercial & Waterfront District	5,450	77%	Commercial	2,850	40%
	Sand Beach	200	3%	Parks/Rec. & Open Space	500	7%
				Institutional	2,300	33%
Alternative 3 Sites	Residential	3,080	24%	Residential	670	5%
	Commercial & Waterfront District	4,370	34%	Commercial	9,620	76%
	Industrial	5,300	42%	Industrial	0	0%
				Institutional	1680	13%
				Parks/Rec. & Open Space	780	6%

Source: staff analysis.¹ The golf course is not considered in the compatibility review since the golf course would remain (with some internal modifications) within the existing footprint and this use is compatible with most land uses.

Alternatives 2, 4, and 5

In general, the development pattern around the Broadwater site is consistent with the development of Alternatives 2, 4, and 5. The adjacent properties are primarily zoned commercial and waterfront district (77 percent) with some residential zoning south of the golf course. The future land use designations are similar to the zoning except for a large (33 percent) designation of institutional (the Southern Memorial Park Cemetery).

The uses on the Broadwater site focus on US 90 and the Mississippi Sound, which fits with the role of US 90 as the city of Biloxi's traditional commercial and tourism-related corridor. This pattern is projected to continue as identified in the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan* (in LUPE-33), which states "tourist oriented facilities including hotels, motels, restaurants, clubs, and recreational attractions should be encouraged to continue concentrating along US 90 and near

1 Interstate 10 interchanges. These represent a redevelopment opportunity for underutilized sites
2 along Beach Boulevard" (City of Biloxi, 1996b)

1 development pressures persist in Biloxi. Section 4.13 discusses the impacts of the Proposed
2 Action and its alternatives on environmental justice in the neighboring communities.

3 4 **4.8.4 Impacts on Spin-Off Development**

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6 The primary indirect impact of the Proposed Action and its alternatives would be the potential for
7 spin-off development. "Spin-off development" refers to support services that develop in the
8 vicinity of a large employment and/or customer generator, such as a casino resort. The potential
9 exists for the redevelopment of sites near the proposed casino resort as supporting uses such as
10 restaurants, bars, retail, or entertainment. Spin-off development may change the character of the
11 land use pattern in the area, an impact that can be positive, negative, or both. For example, a
12 redevelopment project may reduce blight while causing conflicts with adjacent uses.

13
14 In order to characterize the potential types of spin-off development resulting from actions on
15 each site, a comparison was conducted of the undeveloped land with the zoning and future land
16 use of the subject property, and the general development patterns in the area. The results of this
17 comparison are presented in the following sections.

18 19 *Alternatives 2, 4, and 5*

20
21 Alternatives 2, 4, and 5 propose more intensive use of the existing Broadwater site. The draw of
22 more visitors and employees to the site could increase the pressure to develop undeveloped land
23 near the Broadwater site. The entrances and activities on the Broadwater site are focused around
24 US 90; therefore, the US 90 corridor would be the likely location of spin-off development.

25
26 Within a quarter-mile of the Broadwater site, it appears that two parcels with direct access to US
27 90 are undeveloped. These two parcels account for approximately 15 percent of the land within
28 one-quarter mile of the Broadwater site with direct access to US 90. Both of these parcels are
29 designated for commercial use. Since the majority of the property near the Broadwater site is
30 currently developed, the potential for spin-off development from Alternatives 2, 4, and 5 (with
31 the exception of the two parcels mentioned above) is relatively low.

32 33 *Alternative 3*

34
35 The proposed development of the Alternative 3 sites would disperse the spin-off development
36 throughout the Back Bay. In all, approximately 30 percent of the land within a quarter-mile of
37 the dispersed sites is undeveloped and distributed among numerous individual parcels. This
38 undeveloped property includes a mix of land with zoning designation of residential, commercial,
39 and industrial. However, a majority of these same properties (approximately 80 percent) are
40 designated as commercial on the City of Biloxi Future Land Use Map. This indicates that the
41 potential for spin-off development to provide support services for Alternative 3 sites is relatively
42 high, but the timing may be delayed until convenient access is provided (via the Bayview Avenue
43 realignment).

1 Spin-off development around the Alternative 3 sites may also provide an economic benefit to the
2 city by redeveloping distressed property. David Staehling, Director of Economic Development
3 and Cultural Affairs for the City of Biloxi, stated that "all of the land on the outer perimeter of
4 the peninsula was very distressed" and that "long-term economic decay existed with no real
5 upside potential for redevelopment" (Mississippi Cooperative Extension Center, 1996). The
6 presence of the casino resorts on the Alternative 3 sites, and the improved access to these
7 properties via the proposed Bayview Avenue realignment, may provide the needed impetus for
8 redevelopment along the Back Bay.

10 However, this redevelopment would most likely be service, retail commercial, and tourism-
11 related activities, which are consistent with the City of Biloxi Future Land Use Map but conflict
12 with a need for industrial sites identified as a goal in the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan*. As stated
13 in LUPE-45 of the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan*, "historically, Biloxi's industrial properties were
14 located along the shoreline and the railroad. Some of these locations contain vacant industrial
15 land or buildings that could possibly be recycled and may become future industrial facilities"
16 (city of Biloxi, 1996b).

18 It also appears that approximately 20 percent of the undeveloped land is located in established
19 residential neighborhoods. In these areas, the potential for spin-off development may be for
20 residential development that could house employees or, if the pressures are strong enough, for
21 commercial intrusion into existing neighborhoods. In some areas, commercial intrusion into
22 existing residential neighborhoods is consistent with the City of Biloxi Future Land Use Map.
23 However, this pattern is contrary to LUPE-20 in the *Biloxi Comprehensive Plan*, which states
24 "encourage preservation of existing and developing residential neighborhoods and foster
25 development of new neighborhoods" (city of Biloxi, 1996b).

27 *No-Action Alternative*

29 Under the No-action Alternative, the uses on the Broadwater and Alternative 3 sites would
30 remain; therefore, no additional pressure for spin-off development would be generated by on-site
31 uses. However, as the city of Biloxi continues to grow and land becomes scarce and more
32 valuable, development and redevelopment of areas adjacent to the Broadwater site and the
33 Alternative 3 sites are likely. Existing plans, such as the Bayview Avenue realignment and
34 widening, may encourage spin-off development on the east end of the Biloxi peninsula and along
35 the Back Bay. While the Back Bay is currently characterized by operating and abandoned
36 commercial and industrial uses, with residential neighborhoods on the inland side of Bayview
37 Avenue, future development trends may see these sites being developed for casino and tourism-
38 related activities. This trend may result in similar development impacts and conflicts as
39 discussed for the spin-off development from actions on the dispersed sites in Alternative 3.

4.8.5 Mitigation

Proposed land use impacts attributable to the Proposed Action could be reduced if the following mitigation measures were implemented:

- Install landscape buffers between the proposed development and adjacent residential property. For development at the Broadwater site adjacent to the cemetery, install landscape buffers with an 8-foot-high, 100-percent opaque screening wall.
- Ensure lighting is facing inward and screened from adjacent property.
- Increase setbacks on side and rear lot lines for structures over two stories and adjacent to single-family residential property and the cemetery.